§34

I have now articulated everything in such a way that anyone can be made aware of the principal points of the theorem that the soul is immortal. If God has decided that the soul should retain its existence, then it is unfailingly certain that it will remain actual in all eternity and, consequently, it will live eternally. If, however, He has decided to annihilate the soul, then nothing will help and it must die, one can say what one will. Who or what can set themselves against, change, or stay the decree of God? Whoever wants to demonstrate through reason that the soul will not die must demonstrate that God has decided in favor of its eternal and unceasing life, and whoever wants to deny the immortality of the soul has to demonstrate, or at least prove with moral certainty, that God has decided upon the death of the soul. I will show that neither of these can be proven with certainty by means of reason. This is because a divine decree in favor of the eternal life or death of the soul is a decree that concerns some contingent future event, and I will show that reason is never capable of providing us with conviction regarding such decrees in advance of their realization. [. . .]

§35

In accordance with the foregoing considerations, we can now see that the question of whether the future life of the soul can be demonstrated by means of reason amounts merely to the question of whether a complete and irrefutable conviction is even attainable with respect to a decree of God concerning a single, future event in this world in advance of its occurrence? To this I answer no, without exception or restriction. There is only a single decree in God, which extends over all parts of the best world, and comprehends no more and no less than all those objects which belong to that world. Whoever wants to demonstrate that God has decided for or against something must demonstrate philosophically that the object of this decree is possible in the best world and belongs to it, or that it is impossible in the best world. If someone wanted, therefore, to demonstrate through reason that we can anticipate the future life of the soul, he would have to demonstrate that the eternal life of the soul belongs to the best world and that its death is impossible in that world; yet this cannot be accomplished. We can select one of only two ways of producing conviction through reason concerning whether something belongs to the best world or not, or what amounts to the same thing, whether something has been decided upon by God or not. 1) The way of experience. Here we can always be infallibly certain that what is actual belongs to the best world and therefore that God has not chosen for it to occur, and that what does not take place is impossible in the best world and God has not chosen for it to occur. Yet, this way can only be selected when we are dealing with past and present things, and accordingly it is unserviceable when it comes to the issue of the soul's immortality. Once we have died, then of course we can attain a complete conviction through reason of our continued duration and life after the body's death, but it is whether we can be certain of this beforehand that we are keen to know. Therefore, those who would demonstrate the soul's immortality through reason must seek to prove 2) a priori that the eternal life of the soul belongs to the best world and that the soul's death in that world is impossible. Yet, our reason is wholly inadequate for this. Through reason, we cannot obtain complete conviction, with mathematical